

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY LISBON

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TAGS: PINS, SP

SUBJECT: ARREST OF SPANISH MILITARY OFFICERS

REF MADRID 1253

1. FOLLOWING REMARKS REGARDING ARREST SPANISH MILITARY
OFFICERS INCLUDED IN INFO MINISTER HERRERA ESTEBAN'S
STATEMENT AFTER COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING FEB 21.

2. QUOTE: WITH RESPECT TO NEWS, SPREAD WITH SENSATIONALISM
AND LACK OF OBJECTIVITY ON PART OF FOREIGN PRESS, REGARDING
SOME OF OUR MILITARY PEOPLE IN BARCELONA, I MUST CLARIFY
THAT THERE WAS NO IMPRISONMENT, BUT CONFINEMENT FOR MISDEEDS.
THERE HAS BEEN A MAJOR AND CAPTAIN OF THE ARMY WHO, IN THE
JUDGEMENT OF A SUPERIOR, COMMITTED A MISDEED, AND IN CONSO-
NANCE WITH MILITARY CODE, WERE PLACED IN CONFINEMENT. NO
IMPRISONMENT RESULTED, THIS IS IMPORTANT TO MAKE CLEAR.
TO MAGNIFY THIS INTO A MILITARY CONSPIRACY IS ABSURD TO
POINT OF BEING HILARIOUS. THERE WAS, THEREFORE, LEVITY
IN REPORTS OF JOURNALISTS. END QUOTE

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3. COMMENT: AP CORRESPONDENT HAS TOLD DATT MONDAY MORNING
THAT INFO REGARDING EXISTENCE OF SIGNED DECLARATION OF

PROTEST NOW APPEARS SOMEWHAT QUESTIONABLE, ALTHOUGH HIS SOURCE MAINTAINS THAT SUBSTANCE OF SUCH A DECLARATION WAS SUPPORTED BY A GROUP OF OFFICERS AND BOTH ITS SUBSTANCE AND ITS SUPPORT BY THE GROUP WERE REPORTED TO THE BARCELONA CAPTAIN GENERAL (BANULS) AND THE ARMY MINISITER.

4. THE COMMON THREAD THAT RUNS THROUGH THE VARIOUS SCENARIOS WE HAVE HEARD IS THE PROTEST OVER SOME KIND OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION TAKEN AGAINST A THIRD, UNNAMED OFFICER WHOSE ASSIGNMENT IN BARCELONA SAID TO HAVE INVOLVED AN INVESTIGATION OF

STRIKING SUBWAY WORKERS. THUS, FROM WHAT APPEARS IN ITSELF TO HAVE BEEN A RELATIVELY INSIGNIFICANT INCIDENT HAS PERHAPS EMERGED AN ISSUE OF SOME SIGNIFICANCE IN THE QUEST FOR SIGNS OF DISSIDENCE OR UNREST WITHIN THE SPANISH MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT: I.E. THE UNHAPPINESS, PROBABLY SHARED BY MANY SPANISH ARMY OFFICERS, WITH BEING USED FROM TIME TO TIME AS A POLICE FORCE TO MAINTAIN INTERNAL CIVIL ORDER.

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